

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE  
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA**

Alexandria Division

UNITED STATES

v.

JOSEPH IP

Case No. 1:21-MJ-322

**UNDER SEAL**

**AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF A COMPLAINT, ARREST WARRANT, AND  
SEARCH WARRANT**

I, Michael T. Gruchacz, being first duly sworn, hereby depose and state as follows:

**INTRODUCTION AND AGENT BACKGROUND**

1. I am a Special Agent of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Homeland Security Investigations (“HSI”) and am currently assigned to the Global Trade Investigations (“GTI”) Group in Washington, DC. I have 22 years of law enforcement experience to include being employed as a Police Officer with the Washington DC Metropolitan Police Department and as a Special Agent with the United States Department of State. I have knowledge of the laws and regulations relating to the illegal exportation and importation of weapons, technology, and other controlled commodities. I am empowered by law to investigate and make arrests for violations of federal law, including the unlawful importation and exportation of merchandise and contraband into and out of the United States.

2. Based upon your Affiant’s training, experience, and discussions with other federal agents related to the investigation of international import-related and National Firearms Act (“NFA”) violations, this Affiant is aware that suppressors, also known as silencers, vary by design and appearance, but all, when properly installed, will silence, muffle or diminish, the report of a portable firearm. *See* 18 U.S.C. § 921(a)(24). Under federal law, a suppressor or silencer is a type of firearm. *See* 26 U.S.C. 5845(a)(7).

The making of a suppressor must be approved in advance by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (“ATF”). To make a silencer, an individual must file an ATF Form 1, which is an application to make a firearm, pay a \$200.00 USD tax, and comply with all other provisions of the law prior to making the firearm. *See* ATF Form 1 (*available at*: <https://www.atf.gov/file/11281/download>). (*last accessed*: October 6, 2020). Approval of Form 1 results in the registration of the firearm and any subsequent transfers must be approved in advanced by the ATF. ATF Form 6 is required to import firearms into the United States. *See* ATF Form 6 (*available at*: <https://www.atf.gov/firearms/docs/form/form-6-part-1-application-and-permit-importation-firearms-ammunition-and/download>) (*last accessed*: August 12, 2021).

3. Your Affiant is aware of devices and items that can be modified to act as suppressors for firearms. One such device is known as a “solvent trap” or “fuel filter.” The intended purpose of these devices is to trap and hold cleaning fluids and there should not be a hole or index mark in these items. A “solvent trap” or “oil filter” in and of itself may have a legitimate purpose of catching excess cleaning fluids and is not a silencer until modified. However, these devices can be manufactured with the intent of repurposing them as silencers. For example, the device may be sold with index markings to indicate where a hole should be drilled and/or the device may be sold with “spacers” which act as baffles that prevent the spreading of sound. A sound suppressor typically includes a metal tube with several interior baffles that form expansion chambers for which the gases expelled from the end of the firearm enter the expansion chambers and exit the suppressor. Under Title 18, United States Code, Section 921(a)(24), the “terms ‘firearm silencer’ and ‘firearm muffler’ mean any device for silencing, muffling, or diminishing the report of a portable firearm, including any combination of parts, designed or redesigned, and intended for use in assembling or fabricating a firearm silencer or firearm muffler, and any part intended only for use in such assembly or fabrication.”

4. The facts set forth in this Affidavit are based on information that I have obtained from my personal involvement in the investigation and from other law enforcement officers who have been involved in this investigation, on documents that I have reviewed, and on my training and experience.

5. This Affidavit is made in support of a criminal complaint and arrest warrant charging Joseph Jak-Man IP (“IP”) with violations of 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(1), felon in possession of a firearm and (a)(1)(A), transporting or shipping in interstate or foreign commerce; 18 U.S.C. § 545, smuggling goods into the United States; 26 U.S.C. § 5861(a, d, f, i, k), possession/manufacturing of unregistered firearms; 27 CFR 447.52, import restrictions applicable to certain countries (China); and 26 U.S.C. § 5844, illegal importation of a firearm. This Affidavit is also being submitted for the limited purpose of an application for a warrant to search 5227 Chohan Ave, Alexandria, VA 22312 (hereinafter TARGET RESIDENCE) as well as a 2015 Honda dark in color bearing VA registration ESTI19XX, Vehicle Identification Number 1HGCT2A81FA004048 (hereinafter TARGET VEHICLE 1), a 1996 Toyota SUV dark in color bearing VA registration IP8, Vehicle Identification Number JT3HN87R88T0021307 (hereinafter TARGET VEHICLE 2) and a Storage Unit (further described below), and to seize evidence, contraband, and instrumentalities of criminal activity that may be found therein. Both vehicles are registered to IP at the TARGET RESIDENCE. Because this Affidavit is being submitted for these limited purposes, I have not set forth all of the information known to me concerning this investigation. Instead, I have set forth information that I believe to be sufficient to establish probable cause for this complaint and these warrants.

#### **RELEVANT STATUTES**

6. 18 U.S.C. § 545 states in part that “[w]hoever knowingly and willfully, with intent to defraud the United States, smuggles, or clandestinely introduces or attempts to smuggle or clandestinely introduce into the United States any merchandise which should have been invoiced, or makes out or passes, or attempts

to pass, through the customhouse any false, forged, or fraudulent invoice, or other document or paper; or whoever fraudulently or knowingly imports or brings into the United States, any merchandise contrary to law, or receives, conceals, buys, sells, or in any manner facilitates the transportation, concealment, or sale of such merchandise after importation, knowing the same to have been imported or brought into the United States contrary to law shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than 20 years, or both.”

7. 26 U.S.C. § 5861(a) provides that it is unlawful to engage in business as a manufacturer or importer of, or dealer in, firearms without having paid the special (occupational) tax, (d) provides that it shall be unlawful for any person to receive or possess a firearm which is not registered to him in the National Firearms Registry and Transfer Record, (f) provides that it shall be unlawful for any person to make a firearm in violation of the provisions of this chapter, (i) provides that it shall be unlawful for any person to receive or possess a firearm which is not identified by a serial number as required by this chapter, and (k) provides that it shall be unlawful for any person to receive or possess a firearm which has been imported or brought into the United States in violation of Section 5844.

8. 26 U.S.C. § 5844 provides that no firearm shall be imported or brought into the United States or any territory under its control or jurisdiction unless the importer establishes, under regulations as may be prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury, that the firearm to be imported or brought in is— (1) being imported or brought in for the use of the United States or any department, independent establishment, or agency thereof or any State or possession or any political subdivision thereof; or (2) being imported or brought in for scientific or research purposes; or (3) being imported or brought in solely for testing or use as a model by a registered manufacturer or solely for use as a sample by a registered importer or registered dealer.

9. 27 CFR § 447.21 contains the U.S. Munitions Import List. Under subsection (d) of the U.S. Munitions Import List, category I—firearms, the following defense articles, designated pursuant to

section 38(a) of the Arms Export Control Act, 22 U.S.C. § 2778(a), and E.O. 13637, are subject to controls: *(d) Firearms silencers and suppressors, including flash suppressors.*

10. 27 CFR § 447.52 lists import restrictions applicable to certain countries. Under subsection (a), it is the policy of the United States to deny licenses and other approvals with respect to defense articles and defense services originating in certain countries or areas. This policy applies to countries or areas with respect to which the United States maintains an arms embargo, including China. It also applies when an import would not be in furtherance of world peace and the security and foreign policy of the United States.

11. 18 USC § 922(g)(1) states that “[i]t shall be unlawful for any person—who has been convicted in any court of, a crime punishable by imprisonment for a term exceeding one year; to possess a firearm.”

12. 18 USC § 922(a)(1)(A) states “[i]t shall be unlawful—for any person, except a licensed importer, licensed manufacturer, or licensed dealer, to engage in the business of importing, manufacturing, or dealing in firearms, or in the course of such business to ship, transport, or receive any firearm in interstate or foreign commerce.”

### **DEFINITIONS**

13. For the purpose of this Affidavit, the following terms are defined:

- a) CONTROLLED DELIVERY – The technique of allowing illicit or suspect goods to pass out of, through, or into the United States under supervision of an authorized law enforcement officer, with the goal of identifying persons involved in criminal activity.
- b) CUSTOMS DECLARATION – A hard copy or electronic form on which is “declared” or listed, the details of any goods that are being imported or exported to/from the United States, whether by means of commercial shipments or in-person. Mailing

goods into or out of the United States also requires the sending party to complete a customs declaration form.

- c) FIREARM – The term “firearm” means (A) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; (B) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (C) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or (D) any destructive device (Title 18, United States Code, Section 921(a)(3)).
- d) FIREARM SILENCER or FIREARM MUFFLER – The terms “firearm silencer” and “firearm muffler” mean any device for silencing, muffling, or diminishing the report of a portable firearm, including any combination of parts, designed or redesigned, and intended for use in assembling or fabricating a firearm silencer or firearm muffler, and any part intended only for use in such assembly or fabrication (Title 18, United States Code, Section 921(a)(24)). According to information received from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives (“ATF”), legitimate solvent traps are devices attached to the muzzle of a firearm barrel designed to catch or “trap” dirty cleaning solvent pushed through the barrel from the chamber end and out through the muzzle. Solvent traps are intended to prevent solvent from dripping, spraying, or spattering when pushed out the muzzle end of a firearm barrel. **The front end-cap of a solvent trap/fuel filter must be solid and have no hole that will allow a projectile to pass through (including “pilot” holes that can be widened to allow a projectile to pass-through or marks indicating the location to drill such a hole). Devices that have a hole in or indexing mark for a hole in the front end-cap are classified as a “firearm silencer” under the National Firearms Act (“NFA”). See**

**ATF Firearms & Ammunition Technology Division, Technical Bulletin 20-01  
(Oct. 30, 2019).**

- e) SMUGGLING – Fraudulently or knowingly importing or bringing into the United States, any merchandise contrary to law, or receiving, concealing, buying, selling, or in any manner facilitating the transportation, concealment, or sale of such merchandise after importation, knowing the same to have been imported or brought into the United States contrary to law (Title 18, United States Code, Section 545).
- f) MERCHANDISE and GOODS – Interchangeable terms both describing anything that can be imported or exported from the United States.
- g) EXTENDED BORDER SEARCH – This is an extension of a customs officer's authority to conduct warrantless searches of people, cargo, and means of transport, including mail, for unlawfully imported or exported goods at the borders of the United States. The extension pertains to searches away from the border where there is reasonable certainty a border was crossed, reasonable certainty that no change in the object of the search has occurred from the time a border was crossed and the time of the search, and reasonable suspicion criminal activity is occurring.

**PREVIOUS LEGAL PROCESS**

14. On February 12, 2021, I obtained search warrants for [JOSEPHIP8@GMAIL.COM](mailto:JOSEPHIP8@GMAIL.COM) (TARGET ACCOUNT 1) and [IP77JOSEPH@GMAIL.COM](mailto:IP77JOSEPH@GMAIL.COM) (TARGET ACCOUNT2) before the Honorable Magistrate Judge John F. Anderson

**SUBJECT OF INVESTIGATION**

15. Joseph IP is a United States Citizen, born in Cleveland, OH. IP lists TARGET ACCOUNT 1 on his U.S. Passport application as a form of contact. IP has multiple misdemeanor and

felony convictions related to receiving stolen property, burglary (Felony 3 Cuyahoga County OH, 24 months), possession of criminal tools (Felony 3 Cuyahoga County OH), attempt theft (Felony 5 Cuyahoga County OH), breaking and entering, arson, carrying a concealed firearm and narcotics violations (12 months Summit County Ohio 5 years probation). This investigation has revealed several PayPal and eBay accounts subscribed to by IP, utilizing target account 1 and 2 as well as his residence at 5227 Chowan Ave, Alexandria, VA 22312 (TARGET RESIDENCE). According to IP's social media, he has a disdain for law enforcement and highlights photos suggesting this. IP has video on his Instagram account showing him at protests wearing multi-cam body armor plates and a "defund MPD" mask. IP also has several concerning purchases (further discussed below) such as silencers, firearm parts and gas masks. IP is not unknown to The Department of Homeland Security. On June 19, 2017, a parcel destined for a previous address of IP was seized and contained 102 ecstasy pills. On August 3, 2018, a parcel containing 13 grams of Methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA) was seized, destined for IP at another previous address. I have also confirmed through ATF that IP has never applied for a Form 1 or Form 6 to import, possess and manufacture firearms. As a convicted felon, he would not be approved. IP previously resided at 4001 Dakota Ct, Alexandria, VA 22312. IP had many illegal items sent to this location before he moved to the TARGET RESIDENCE. As stated below, a parcel containing four firearm suppressors was seized by authorities pursuant at a border search indicating that IP brought his contraband from Dakota Ct to the TARGET RESIDENCE. IP has two vehicles listed to the target address. (Additional Photos in Attachment C)

#### **STATEMENT OF FACTS AND PROBABLE CAUSE**

16. Since in and around October 2019, HSI has been investigating certain unlawful importations of firearms and related controlled components into the United States, specifically, those originating from sources in China and elsewhere. HSI and CBP began targeting known manufacturers



and shippers of silencers and placing “holds” on the packages so that they could be detained and seized if/when encountered at a U.S. port of entry. According to the ATF, recently there has been an influx of counterfeit or non-regulated suppressors entering the United States via foreign sources. ATF has encountered these suppressors and partnered with HSI and Customs and Border Protection (“CBP”) to combat the flow of these suppressors into the United States. Since this operation has commenced, there have been over 12,000 of these devices seized at the U.S. Ports of Entry and during investigative controlled deliveries targeting individuals who received the items contrary to law.

17. Based on my training and experience, inline filters, fuel filters, solvent traps as well as other descriptions of devices coming from China are marketed as being used in vehicles as fuel filters as well as screwed onto the end of a barrel to “catch” cleaning solvents. During this investigation I have encountered several types of these devices that I believe are being converted into silencers. Monolithic core devices which consist of a one-piece core surrounded by a metal sleeve, stacked baffle device, which has several metal pieces stacked inside of a tube that can be custom cut depending on the need of the user and K baffles, which are similar to stacked baffles but have a more cone shape baffle inside of the metal tube. A sound suppressor typically includes a metal tube with several interior baffles that form expansion chambers from which the gases expelled from the end of the firearm enter the expansion chambers and exit the suppressor. Based on analysis of previous seizures, I believe that a stacked baffle and K baffle silencer weighs approximately .13 KG-.18 KG. and a monolithic silencer weighs approximately .25 KG.

18. On or about January 19, 2021, I was notified about a parcel that was destined for IP at 5227 Chohan Ave, Alexandria, VA 22312 (TARGET RESIDENCE). The parcel contained four (4) firearm suppressors. The parcel was seized after a border search was conducted on the parcel at the International Mail Facility at JFK Airport. The parcel was then sent to me as evidence in the case.

**PAYPAL AND EBAY EVIDENCE**

19. Based on the fact that IP is a convicted felon who was ordering firearm suppressors, I contacted eBay and PayPal regarding transactions that IP has conducted with the two companies. I know from my training and experience that individuals who order suppressors from China often use eBay and PayPal.

20. PayPal account ending in ending in 3064 was created January 4, 2021, using TARGET ACCOUNT 1. Account ending in 1704 was created September 9, 2020, using TARGET ACCOUNT 2. Account ending in 9044 was created February 15, 2020, using TARGET ACCOUNT 1. Account ending in 0957 was created January 15, 2019, using TARGET ACCOUNT 1. Account ending in 7814 was created on September 4, 2008, using TARGET ACCOUNT 1. Account ending in 4939 was created May 21, 2005, using TARGET ACCOUNT 1.

21. There were several concerning purchases made by IP using PayPal account ending in 4939 and 0957.

- March 27, 2020, GLOCK TAC LIGHT TACTICAL OEM
- April 3, 2019, D Cell 9/16x24 Low Profile Maglite Replacement End Cap flashlight thread solvent
- January 15, 2019, UTG TL-K7FAD01 Side Folding Stock Adapter fits 4 & 6 Position Extension Tubes
- January 16, 2019, FUEL TRAP / SOLVENT FILTER 1X6 1-1/2X6 1-3/4X10 NAPA 4003, WIX 24003 USA [1X6, 1.050" OD, 7/8" ID]
- January 16, 2019, Aluminum Dry Storage Cups for 1.750" Tubes "I'AM BACK" Maglite
- January 17, 2019, 6Pc 5.5mm HSS Titanium Coated Point Twist Drill Bit Straight Shank Length 91mm
- January 17, 2019, Genuine M 4003 Fuel Filter (Napa, 4003 Wix 24003) \*Made in USA-Buy American\*

22. IP has an active eBay account and what appear to be several inactive accounts. User ID xcomputer-fixerx was created on March 13, 2004, using TARGET ACCOUNT 1 and lists the TARGET RESIDENCE as the shipping address. The name who subscribed to the account is "Joseph

Ip". IP made the below listed purchases from this eBay account using TARGET ACCOUNT1.

- January 8, 2019, GLOCK Magazine .40 Cal. 10 Rounds Includes Loader
- March 30, 2019, Butler Creek SL-10CL Clear 10 Round Steel Lips Ruger 10/22 Magazine 22LR Rifle
- August 28, 2019, UTG TL-K7FAD01 Side Folding Stock Adapter fits 4 & 6 Position Extension Tubes
- June 10, 2019, AVID AVMICRO1022 Black Ruger 10/22 Keychain Gun Smithing Firearm Micro-Tool
- February 26, 2019, Tactical Ergonomic Ambidextrous Picatinny Rail Mount Folding Foregrip Black
- January 29, 2019, 8 Pack Aluminum Storage Cups NAPA 4003 WIX 24003, Cup OD 1.797"
- May 21, 2019, Maglite D Cell Cap Set 1/2"-28 Replace Combo Threaded End Caps For Flashlights
- May 16, 2019, Gen 3 Maglite C Cell Cap set 1/2"-28 Replacement end caps
- January 25, 2019, 1X6, 1-1/2X6, 1-3/4X10 filter
- January 19, 2019, Aluminum Dry Storage Cups for 1.750" Tubes "I'AM BACK" Maglite
- January 24, 2019, Genuine M 4003 Fuel Filter (Napa 4003 Wix 24003) \*Made in USA-Buy American\*
- January 18, 2019, Craftsman 8-inch Drill Press Model # 137.219080 LOCAL PICKUP ONLY Chantilly, VA
- March 26, 2020, 6Pc 5.5mm HSS Titanium Coated Point Twist Drill Bit Straight Shank Length 91mm
- March 12, 2020, Premium NBC Gas Mask German Drager Military & Police M65 Full-Face w/NBC Filter
- March 28, 2020, GLOCK TAC LIGHT TACTICAL OEM MINT. FREE SHIPPING!
- April 28, 2020, 3 Maglite ML25LT-S2016 Black 2-Cell C LED Twist Head Black Flashlight Light
- June 2, 2020, Med US Military Ballistic Advanced Combat Helmet ACH MICH MSA Foliage Green IIIA
- June 13, 2020, ESS Profile Series Goggles Ballistic Military Tactical Profile NVG
- January 25, 2021, Norseman 49420 5.5mm Metric Jobber Length Drill Bit - 2 Pack
- February 20, 2021, Red Laser Boresighter Bore Sight kit for .22 to .50 Caliber Rifles Handgun

### **EVIDENCE FOUND IN TARGET ACCOUNTS**

23. I have reviewed the raw data provided to me by Google, Inc. which is a mirror image of IP's email accounts. TARGET ACCOUNT 2 contained nothing of evidentiary value. TARGET ACCOUNT 1 contained several emails of evidentiary value. An email dated January 16, 2019 confirmed an order being shipped to IP for "8 pack aluminum storage cups napa 4003/wix24003 for \$69.98, Fuel trap solvent filter 1x6 for \$128.99." Additional emails are as follows:

-January 17, 2019 “your order is being shipped,” Aluminum dry storage cups for 1.75 tubes :I am back). Purchased for \$59.30.

-January 15, 2019, “your order is confirmed.” Black Ruger 10/22 gun smithing tool \$13.95, Red Laser Bore sighter \$12.82, Ergonomic Ambidextrous folding foregrip \$12.95.

-January 18, 2019, he purchased a Craftsman drill press for \$90.00. I know from training and experience that IP uses this to further manufacture the suppressors he obtains.

-January 16, 2019, he purchased Maglite D-Cell threaded end caps for suppressors costing \$12.40.

-August 16, 2019, IP purchased three suppressors from online retailer BANGGOOD in the amount of \$32.97.

-January 17, 2019, IP purchased a 110 round drum magazine for a rifle costing \$44.99 and a 25-round magazine for a rifle costing \$25.98 from GUNMAGWAREHOUSE.

24. On July 10, 2017, IP received an email after IP attempted to visit Kathy Kirby, inmate 1621029 at a Virginia Department of Corrections facility and made a formal request to do so. The request was denied due to “falsifying information on your application regarding felony convictions.”

25. Several emails dated between 2013 and 2017 were recovered from [WWW.ARMSLIST.COM](http://WWW.ARMSLIST.COM) between IP and several individuals who were selling firearms via the website. IP would have been on probation until November 2015 for his felony conviction. On February 28, 2014, IP has a conversation attempting to purchase a Glock in Falls Church, VA. On August 1, 2013, IP and an individual agree to meet up at Famous Dave’s Barbecue located in Oakton, VA to purchase a Tactical Mossberg Shotgun. On April 25, 2014, IP had a conversation with an individual trying to purchase an AR15 lower. On February 15, 2017, IP had a conversation with an individual inquiring about purchasing a Beretta 96 pistol. It is clear that IP is utilizing discreet options to purchase firearms because he cannot

legally purchase from a dealer with a Federal Firearms License due to IP being a felon.

#### **IDENTIFICATION OF STORAGE UNIT**

26. On August 8, 2021, I reviewed an email dated October 16, 2020, indicating that IP rented a 10x15 storage unit located at Life Storage, 6457 General Green Way, Alexandria, VA 22312. The unit is 4046 and is a ground level unit. The unit has a yellow roll up door and 4046 is located directly above the door. His account is still active and I confirmed this on August 8, 2021 by utilizing his access code to access the gated area leading to his locked unit. The rental agreement was found in TARGET ACCOUNT 1 and provided the storage unit number and access code to the gate allowing entry to the common area. I know that IP has been renting properties. His latest ones are 4001 Dakota Ave and the TARGET RESIDENCE. I know that several other people live at the TARGET RESIDENCE and storage of personal items may not be available. I know from training and experience that renters need to store items not currently being used and I also know from training and experience that criminals use rental units to conceal criminal activity, such as hiding weapons in other places so as to not alert roommates or landlords.

#### **IDENTIFICATION OF VEHICLES**

27. Two vehicles are registered to IP at the TARGET ADDRESS. A Black in color 2015 Honda bearing Virginia registration ESTI9XX and vehicle identification number 1HGCT2A81FA004048 (TARGET VEHICLE1). The second vehicle is a 1996 Toyota SUV bearing Virginia registration IP8 and vehicle identification number JT3HN87R8T0021307 (TARGET VEHICLE 2). I have seen IP drive the TARGET VEHICLES during surveillance and know from my training and experience that it is common for individuals to keep receipts from purchases inside of vehicles as well as for individuals to conceal firearms inside of vehicles, specifically felons who try to conceal the fact that they have access to firearms. In order to confirm that all firearms in IP's

possession are in fact recovered, a search of the TARGET VEHICLES is necessary.

### **INSTALLATION OF A POLECAM**

28. On or about July 22, 2021, I had a polecam installed on a telephone pole outside of the TARGET RESIDENCE. IP was seen numerous times entering and exiting the residence as well as driving/interacting with TARGET VEHICLE 1 and TARGET VEHICLE 2. IP has been seen numerous times walking his dog on the premises and utilizing the front door when he enters and exits the premises.

### **REQUEST FOR SEALING**

29. It is respectfully requested that this Court issue an order sealing, until IP appears before the Court, all papers submitted in support of this application for a complaint, arrest warrant, and search warrant, including this Affidavit, the applications, and the warrants themselves. Your Affiant submits that the requested sealing is necessary because the information and items to be disclosed and seized are relevant to an ongoing investigation into the criminal activities described herein. Based upon my training and experience, your Affiant has learned that criminals actively search the Internet for criminal complaints, arrest warrants, search warrants, and affidavits, and disseminate them to other criminals as they deem appropriate, such as by posting them publicly online. Premature disclosure of the contents of this Affidavit and related documents may compromise this ongoing investigation by, among other things, causing the subject to flee and the suspect to destroy or alter evidence.

### **CONCLUSION**

30. Based on the following, I believe that there is probable cause for a complaint and arrest warrant for IP charging crimes related to violations of 18 U.S.C. § 545, smuggling goods into the United States; 26 U.S.C. § 5861(a, d, f, i, k), possession/manufacturing of unregistered firearms; 27 CFR 447.52, and 18 U.S.C. §922(g)(1), felon in possession of a firearm. Additionally, based on the same information,

your Affiant believes there is probable cause to obtain a search warrant for the premises described in Attachment A for crimes related to violations of 18 U.S.C. § 545, smuggling goods into the United States; 26 U.S.C. § 5861(a, d, f, i, k), possession/manufacturing of unregistered firearms; 27 CFR 447.52, 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(1), felon in possession of a firearm and (a)(1)(A) transporting or shipping in interstate or foreign commerce; and 26 U.S.C. § 5844, illegal importation of a firearm. I believe that a search of the TARGET RESIDENCE will yield fruits and instrumentalities of a crime as described in Attachment B.



---

Special Agent Michael Gruchacz  
Homeland Security Investigations  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Subscribed and sworn to in accordance with  
Fed. R. Crim. P. 4.1 by telephone on September 30, 2021:

Theresa C. Buchanan

Digitally signed by Theresa C.  
Buchanan  
Date: 2021.09.30 13:59:08 -04'00'

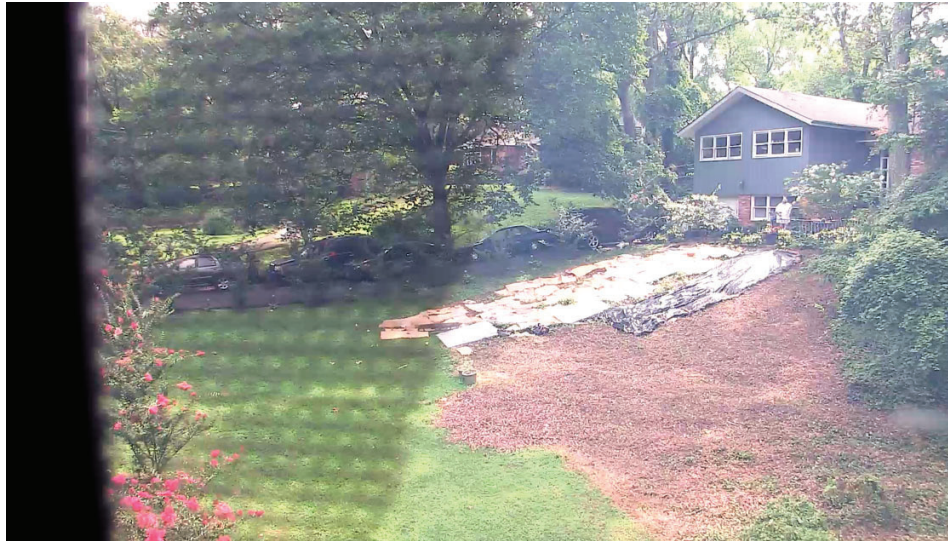
HON. THERESA CARROLL BUCHANAN  
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE



**ATTACHMENT A**

**PREMISES TO BE SEARCHED**

5227 Chowan Ave, Alexandria, VA 22312 is a two-story house with a brick facade in the front, white garage door and a gray/blue wooden facade above the garage. 5227 is clearly posted on a mailbox at the foot of the driveway.





### **Storage Unit**

The unit is a 10x15 storage unit located at Life Storage, 6457 General Green Way, Alexandria, VA 22312. The unit is 4046 and is a ground level unit. The unit has a yellow roll up door and 4046 is located directly above the door.



### **TARGET VEHICLE 1**



**TARGET VEHICLE 2**



**ATTACHMENT B**

The items to be searched for and seized are as follows:

1. Evidence, fruits, and instrumentalities of violations of: 18 U.S.C. § 545, smuggling goods into the United States; 26 U.S.C. § 5861(a, d, f, i, k), possession/manufacturing of unregistered firearms; 27 CFR 447.52, import restrictions applicable to certain countries (China); and 26 U.S.C. § 5844, illegal importation of a firearm.
2. Any and all records including financial information, including tax returns and Internal Revenue Service filings, and any work papers related thereto; bank, credit or securities account statements, applications, deposit tickets, receipts, canceled checks, cashier checks, money orders, wire transfer records, debit/credit memos; financial ledgers, journals, investment records, real estate records, other records of assets; records of or related to contributions, grants or disbursements made or received, and/or allocations; loan records, financial statements, audit work papers, audit reports (or correspondence, transmittals or document related to any of the foregoing) related to the conspiracy.
3. Records, receipts, and document pertaining to travel between the United States and other countries and travel within the United States.
4. Records, receipts, and documents pertaining to the transfer of money to, from, and within the United States.
5. Any and all immigration documents, passports, visas, and documents that could be submitted in behalf of an application for a visa, travel documents, United States and foreign identification documents, identity cards issued by any foreign government, travel records including itineraries and receipt stubs, and airline tickets.
6. Diaries, organizers, day planners, appointment books, telephone message pads, address books and the like.
7. All identification documents reflecting the use of an alias, fictitious, or nominee name, including passports, Social Security cards, immigration papers (to include but not limited to green cards, work permits, visa) driver's license (domestic or foreign), and state identification cards (domestic or foreign).
8. All electronic storage devices and disks, input/output peripheral devices, related software, documentation, and data security devices (including passwords) necessary to ensure the reliable analysis and retrieval of the foregoing electronic and tangible objects by a qualified expert, including any and all cellular telephones.
9. Computers and computer hardware, meaning any and all computer equipment including any electronic, magnetic, optical, or similar computer impulses or data, network equipment and peripherals, the software to operate them, and any data processing hardware.

10. Any and all information and/or data stored in the form of magnetic, digital, or electronic coding on computer media or on media capable of being read by a computer or with the aid of computer related equipment. This media includes but is not limited to floppy diskettes, fixed hard disks, removable hard disk cartridges, tapes, laser disks, videocassettes, and any other media, which is capable of storing magnetic coding.

11. Any and all electronic devices which are capable of analyzing, creating, displaying, converting, or transmitting electronic or magnetic computer impulses or data. These devices include but are not limited to computers, computer components, computer peripherals, word processing equipment, modems, monitors, printers, plotters, encryption circuit boards, optical scanners, external hard drives, and other computer related electronic devices.

A) In my training and experience, some cell phone owners “lock” their devices, preventing others from accessing their mobile devices without entering a password, PIN number, pattern lock code, biometrics or other method. I know that accessing “locked” mobile devices can be difficult without the correct password, pattern lock or biometric information. If the items seized are locked with biometric features, such as fingerprints or facial recognition, I believe it may be necessary to place mobile devices on the fingerprints or in front of the facial features of any occupants present in the TARGET RESIDENCE in order to unlock the devices.

B) In my training and experience, an individual who is in possession of a device or has the device among his or her belongings at the time the device is found is likely a user of the device. However, in my training and experience, that person may not be the only user of the device whose biometric features are among those that will unlock the device, and it is also possible that the person in whose possession the device is found is not actually a user of that device at all. Furthermore, in my training and experience, I know that in some cases it may not be possible to know with certainty who is the user of a given device, such as if the device is found in a common area of a premises without any identifying information on the exterior of the device. Thus, it will likely be necessary for law enforcement to have the ability to require any occupant of the TARGET RESIDENCE to press their finger(s) against the sensor of any locked device(s) found during the search of the TARGET RESIDENCE in order to attempt to identify the device’s user(s) and unlock the device(s) via biometric features.

12. Any and all instructions or programs stored in the form of electronic or magnetic media, which are capable of being interpreted by a computer, or related components. The items to be seized could include but would not be limited to operating systems, application software, utility programs, compilers, interpreters, and any other programs or software used to communicate with computer programs or software used to communicate with computer hardware or peripherals either directly or indirectly via telephone lines, DSL lines, cable lines, radio or other means of transmission.

13. Any and all written or printed material which provides instructions or examples concerning the operation of a computer system, computer software, and/or any related device.

14. Any and all firearms, firearms components, silencers, suppressors, bills of sale related to firearms and components and any and all paperwork related to the purchase, transfer, mailing or otherwise of firearms.



### ATTACHMENT C

Package seized containing 4 suppressors

